

Town Of Milford

OFFICE OF THE SELECTMEN

~ 2004 SELECTMEN'S REPORT ~

2004 has been a year of rolling up our sleeves and pulling out the magnifying glasses. Although many projects have been undertaken and completed in 2004, this was predominantly a year of study and preparation for change.

Based on growth, taxpayer and voter requests, various study committees' reports, consultants' recommendations, and staff meetings, necessary changes have been identified and departments have been prepared for implementing these changes. 2005 will see vast improvements in the operating infrastructure of Milford's government and the creation of more refined development strategies as we progress in the 21st century.

The first project undertaken by the 2004 Board of Selectmen was to establish goals for the year. The goals included creating an Operations Manual for the Town, improving communication to and from the public and staff with the Board of Selectmen, establishing a Volunteer Program and improving the budget process with the assistance of the Budget Advisory Committee.

The Operations Manual is completed in draft form, ready to be fine-tuned by the 2005 Board.

Improvement in communication is best exemplified by the Selectmen's 'Granite Town Quarterly Newsletter', now sent to each Milford address at no charge to the taxpayers. Staff communication is improving with bi-weekly reports from Department Heads to the Board of Selectmen.

The Volunteer Program is an effort to augment some staffing needs with the skills and work residents have offered to donate. The Town continues to benefit from thousands of volunteer hours invested each year. The current goal is to organize the volunteers through a Volunteer Committee. However, organizing volunteers within the constraints of privacy concerns and over-site regulations is arduous. Creative minds that would like to brainstorm and implement strategies are still needed.

Selectmen worked to keep the Budget Advisory Committee current on information as the budget process unfolded. The Committee was excellent, having members attend Selectmen's budget work sessions. Joint meetings afforded both the Committee and the Board the opportunity to clarify and address concerns with first hand information. Committee members were diligent in their research and articulating their concerns. The Selectmen extend a special "Thank You" to Budget Advisory Committee Chairman, Therese Oriani Mueller, whose leadership was a wonderful example of cooperation.

Other committees embarked on new missions in 2004 including the Form of Government Committee, the Water and Wastewater Village District Study Committee, the Ambulance Study Committee and the Police Station Facility Committee. These hardworking groups each charged forward to provide the Town with research, and ultimately, recommendations for improvements.

The Form of Government Committee determined Milford's current structure of a five member Board of Selectmen will serve the town best as we move forward in the 21st Century.

The Water and Wastewater Village District Study Committee is supporting a Warrant Article to establish separate Water/Waste Water Commissioners providing the opportunity for more focus on those particular departments.

The Ambulance Study Committee recommended allowing the voters to decide if the Town should continue with the current ambulance service or move to a private provider.

The Police Station Facility Committee has worked with architects, planners and vendors to establish final plans for the New Police Facility passed by the voters. Included in the architecture are granite pieces from the Garden Street School which was destroyed by fire just hours before the community was to head to the polls to determine its fate.

Changes that actually occurred in 2004 include the addition of the Gregg's Crossing Footbridge, which crosses the Souhegan River between the future home of the Boys and Girls Club of the Souhegan Valley and Keyes Field. Other changes were the addition of angled parking and sidewalks on West Street, completion of Union Street paving, and the streetlight upgrades. Communications equipment was purchased for use at MACC Base and a contract was signed to have a new emergency communication tower constructed. The industrial portion of the BROX Property was listed with Vear Realty, the process of clean up of the Savage Well progressed and the Traffic Safety Committee was established.

Through the efforts of Finance Director Rose Evans, the Finance Department reduced its number of full-time staff by one, combining and redistributing workflow. (Rose continues to be a terrific asset to the Town in her capacity as Finance Director.) The number of Daytime Call Firefighters positions was increased by five in an effort to stave off the need for more full-time crew and the three Fire Wards positions ended in March following last years vote to dissolve them.

New in 2005 will be the reorganization of the Town Clerk and Tax Collector's office. The change reduces the number of clerks by one and drove the decision to rearrange the offices in Town Hall to better accommodate you, our customers. The rewiring of Town Hall's technology network will also be completed. Technology improvements will not only be limited to Town Hall, the Public/Education/Government (PEG) Cable Access Channels will go live in 2005 as well as "swipe cards" for pool passes through the Recreation Department.

Also, the Board would like to extend a special thank you to the many people and organizations which have made direct contributions to the Town. Although we are sure to miss some, thank you to: the Arthur L. Keyes Memorial Trust Fund for \$8,300.00 toward the Keyes Field Pool House Expansion; The Estate of Geraldine Marchesi for \$2,000 to the Milford Police Department for the care of Zed and to carry out the duties of the Canine Unit; Coca Cola for \$683.00 toward a Fire Department Defibrillator; Thomas Hoose for \$200.00 for Milford Mediation; and a local donation of \$1,025.00 for use by the Facilities Planning Committee.

Finally, the Board would like to recognize the staff of the Recycling Center which set a high example of teamwork while they were without their Supervisor Tammy Scott. The Town continues to thrive because of those who care about it.

Respectfully.

The Milford Board of Selectmen

Cynthia Herman, Chairman

Gary Daniels, Vice Chairman

Noreen O'Connell

Leonard Mannino

Lawrence Pickett